



Australian Government  
Department of Agriculture,  
Water and the Environment



# FODDER FOR THE FUTURE



Irrigated Cropping Council  
*Promoting irrigated agriculture*

## Trial site update October 2021

Murray Dairy has partnered with the Irrigated Cropping Council through the Fodder for the Future project to conduct demonstration trials investigating management strategies for cereals and faba-beans as fodder for dairy cows.

A collaboration between the dairy, cropping and fodder industries, these two trials are helping all parties better understand the needs of cropping farmers and dairy farmers' requirements for high quality fodder.

### What are we measuring?

- The first trial is looking at the impact of sowing dates and seeding rates for wheat (Cesario) and oats (Forrester) crops. Sowing dates were early and late April. Sowing rates were 80, 120, 180 and 270 plants per m<sup>2</sup>.
- Two different cutting times to understand the impact of harvest time on quality and yield for each cut.
- The second trial is looking at two sowing rates and three harvest dates for Faba beans (PBA Bendoc) and how they might fit into a dairy farm fodder strategy.

Two irrigations have been applied since the last update – end of August and 27 September. For the faba beans it is expected that one more irrigation will be needed.

The oats and wheat have been cut at growth stage 47-49. The early sown oats were cut on September 8 and the later sown ones cut on September 24. The early sown oats got to booting stage early than the later sown but interestingly sowing time had no impact on the wheat, as both sowing times were cut on September 27. Final cut or hay will be at growth stage 71.

The early sown faba beans have had their first cut on September 27 as they had finished flowering. The later sown are still flowering and awaiting their first cut. The plants were around 1300mm high which is quite tall and it is estimated would yield around 14 t dry matter.

There are still two more cuts to come with the faba beans:

1. Pods present but not mature
2. When plants are physiologically mature (ie not growing any more and beans are fully developed – still high moisture).

### Irrigated Cropping Council trial site







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*Oats crop on the left and wheat crop on the right, sown at the same time. October 2021*



*Faba beans stage of development in the pod*



*Faba beans – early sown on the left and later sown on the right.*

